



Catawba County Planning, Parks and Development
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HOW TO OBTAIN A ZONING PERMIT FOR AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT/GUEST HOUSE

The Catawba County Unified Development Ordinance allows one house per lot. If you are proposing a second house on your property, you may apply for a special use permit to construct an accessory dwelling unit/guest house. The definition of an accessory dwelling unit/guest house is a detached house permitted on the same property as the main house, but significantly smaller. An accessory dwelling unit/guest house is allowed as a special use permit in all residential districts. (See [UDO Sec. 44-638](#))

Steps to follow to obtain a permit to construct an accessory dwelling unit/guest house:

- (1) Check with a representative of the Catawba County Planning, Parks and Development Department to see if the house you are proposing would meet the definition of an accessory dwelling unit/guest house. You may contact the Catawba County Planning, Parks and Development Department at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at planning@catawbacountync.gov.
- (2) If the proposed house meets the criteria as an accessory dwelling unit/guest house, you will need to request a special use permit. A [special use application](#) must be filled out and submitted along with a detailed site plan, prepared by a licensed professional, to the Catawba County Planning, Parks and Development Department by the 15th day of the month preceding the date of the Board of Adjustment's meeting. There is a filing fee of \$425.00.
- (3) The applicant will need to appear before the Catawba County Board of Adjustment on the last Tuesday of the following month at 7:00 p.m. at the Government Center, Second Floor Meeting Room at 100-A Southwest Blvd, Newton, N.C. This is a public hearing and the Board of Adjustment will hear all parties present and make a decision on the request.

Some of the standards that will be used in deciding an application for approval of an accessory dwelling unit/guest house are:

- The same person will need to own both houses and the owner of the property will need to live in one of the houses.
- The size of the house may not exceed 50% of the size of the main house or 650 square feet, whichever is greater.
- Stick-built homes, modular homes, singlewide or doublewide manufactured

homes may be used as an accessory dwelling unit/guest house. If you propose to use a manufactured home, the home will need to be occupied by the mother, father, daughter, son, brother or sister of the property owner, meet Catawba County manufactured home appearance criteria and be located within the [Doublewide Manufactured Home- Overlay \(DWMH-O\) District](#).

- The houses need to share a driveway and meet setbacks for the zoning district.
- (4) After the Board of Adjustment approves your request for an accessory dwelling unit you will need to submit an [application for a zoning permit](#). Every application for a zoning permit needs to include an 8½ x 11 inch or 8½ x 14 inch drawing, prepared to scale, showing the footprints of proposed and existing buildings or structures on the property. You may obtain a copy of a map of your property from Catawba County's Geographic Information System at www.gis.catawba.nc.us.
 - (5) Obtain a zoning permit from the Planning, Parks and Development Department. You may reach the Planning Department by phone at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email at planning@catawbacountync.gov.
 - (6) Submit an [application for a septic tank permit and well permit](#) to the Catawba County Permit Center. If you have questions you may call the Permit Center at 828-465-8399, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email at permit_center@catawbacountync.gov.
 - (7) Submit an [application for a building permit](#) to the Catawba County Permit Center. If you have questions you may call the Permit Center at 828-465-8399, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email at permit_center@catawbacountync.gov.

If you have questions concerning an accessory dwelling unit/guest house, where they may be located or obtaining a permit for your property, please call the Catawba County Planning, Parks and Development Department at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at planning@catawbacountync.gov. Please know that we are here to assist you throughout the process.

The purpose of this information sheet is to assist you with the process of obtaining permits and approvals associated with the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Before proceeding with any project or spending any funds, you are strongly encouraged to contact staff of the Catawba County Planning, Parks and Development Department at 828-465-8380, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at planning@catawbacountync.gov to insure awareness of all options that may exist as well as the most effective way of accomplishing a particular project.